Northern Ontario Residents Streamlined Training and Reimbursement Program (NORSTAR)

Resident Electives – Frequently Asked Questions

September 2023

1. **Which resident electives are eligible for expense reimbursement via NORSTAR and how do I apply?**

   In order to be eligible for travel and expense reimbursement via NORSTAR, resident electives must meet the following criteria:
   - Start on or after July 1, 2023
   - Booked on the NOSM online portal (please contact NOSM for link/more information)
   - Located in the Northeast or Northwest Ontario Health regions (note: electives in Bracebridge, Gravenhurst and Huntsville do not meet these criteria, and therefore are not eligible via NORSTAR)

   Follow all expense criteria and guidelines as outlined on the NORSTAR Expense Claim Form for Resident Electives (included below).

2. **When am I eligible to travel to/from my resident elective?**

   Residents can claim expenses in the community up to 1 day before and 1 day after an eligible resident elective. Any additional expenses incurred related to a longer stay in the community will be prorated. Residents choosing to stay in the community on their own expense before or an elective can still receive reimbursement for their airfare to/from the community so long as it is within 1 week of the assignment start/end date.

3. **What is the maximum rate for airfare reimbursement?**

   While there is no maximum airfare for travel within the province, only economy class airfare from a physician's home/base to the community is eligible for reimbursement. Physicians who choose to fly at a higher-class rate must provide a quote for the same flights detailing the economy cost equivalent.

   Physicians with a home base outside of Ontario are eligible to claim a maximum of $1,500 (incl. taxes) for out-of-province economy class return flights. One-way out-of-province flights will be prorated to half the maximum amount (i.e. $750). Physicians who choose to fly at a higher-class rate must provide a quote for the same flights (clearly listing the same dates and times) detailing the economy cost equivalent.

Change fees must be associated with work related changes for reimbursement and departure time must be at least 3 hours from original departure time.

4. **What if my accommodations or car rental exceed the daily allowance?**
   At this time, the program has been approved to reimburse expenses up the daily rates listed on the expense claim form. Any expenses that exceed the daily rate will be prorated to the maximum. The program will continue to review travel expenses across Rural and Northern Ontario and will notify physicians of any approved changes.

5. **What accommodations are eligible for reimbursement?**
   Residents are eligible to claim accommodation expenses during their elective for a single occupancy, standard room in publicly available registered business. Expenses will be reimbursed up to a maximum of $150/night before taxes. NOSM Housing is also an acceptable option.

   Private stays with family, friends or colleagues are encouraged;$30 per night will be reimbursed and no receipt is required.

   Accommodations receipts must meet the following requirements for reimbursement:

   a) Issued in the name of the physician.
   b) Include an itemized breakdown of all charges and fees (nightly rate must be listed)
   c) Include proof of payment, date of service, and vendor contact information.
   d) Include the vendor's registered business number.

   Airbnb is eligible for reimbursement, please note however that additional charges (cleaning fees, processing fees etc.) will all be included towards the daily rate. If any additional charges, once included with the daily rate exceed the maximum $150/night, the expenses will be prorated.

6. **I've submitted my expense claim and associated receipts for an eligible NORSTAR elective. When will I be reimbursed?**

   Payment timelines for electives submitted over the Summer and Fall of 2023 have yet to be determined. All expense claims received to the NORSTAR account during that time will be logged and responded to in sequential order once the program is fully operational.